

# 15 - Administration



## Policy

BLM has adopted the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) *Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook* as the official procedures for handling fire management administrative matters. Periodic supplements will be issued based on BLM needs and/or changes agreed on by the interagency community making up NWCG. This handbook replaced and updated *BLM Manual Section 1111*.

### Purpose

Since the uniform application of interagency policies and guidelines is essential, appropriate procedures in the *Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook* (NWCG Hbk2) should be followed. The BLM Manual will provide a bridge between manual sections and the *Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook*, so that continuity of the BLM manual system is maintained and all additions, changes and supplements are filed in a uniform manner. Field offices may supplement the Handbook (see Manual 1221) to provide additional clarification or information as long as policy or conceptual data is not changed.

### Objectives

The objectives are to assure that fire operations include:

- Maintaining proper finance, property, procurement, and personnel records and forms in a consistent manner.
- Properly classifying emergency fire personnel, and paying such personnel according to classification.
- Applying specific regulations applicable to pay, leave, travel, hazard, pay, etc., in a uniform manner.
- Acquiring necessary equipment and supplies from appropriate sources in accordance with applicable procurement regulations.
- Maintaining adequate property records and accountability procedures.

## Responsibility

*Agency Administrator* The agency administrator provides fire business management information, support to the incident commander, and oversees the fire business management activities and their compliance with BLM policy.

*Incident Commander* The incident commander (IC) establishes and maintains business management practices for activities related to wildland fire management. The IC and assigned staff are responsible for carrying out business management activities as identified in the *Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook*.

## Hazardous Fuel Reduction Operations

### Subactivity 2823

*Fund Code Guidance* This subactivity is commonly referred to as the fuels management program. Congress intended this funding to focus on implementation. The fuels management subactivity requires the use of a project number with all expenditures. The subactivity has been organized into two program elements (reference *1999 Fund Coding Handbook*). Program element "00" is used with all costs associated with a specific project. Program element "01" is used with costs associated with general fuels program activities not tied to a specific project, such as training and program management, and involves the use of "YY99" as the standard project number. The term "program support" is commonly used to identify activities associated with program element "01."

#### *Uses of Funds:*

- Includes costs of implementing prescribed fire, mechanical, and chemical treatments to reduce hazardous fuels and to restore fire to its natural role in ecosystems.
- Includes mechanical and chemical treatments necessary to alter fuels as a precursor to the introduction of fire in its natural role.
- Includes costs of construction and maintenance of fuel breaks that are part of a scientifically planned, NEPA compliant network of strategically located linear connected areas where fuel characteristics are modified to break up continuity of hazardous fuels. To develop a network of connected areas, cooperative agreements with partners may be necessary.
- Includes funding of prescribed fire, mechanical and chemical treatments to remove undesirable vegetation as the first step in ecosystem restoration, *but excludes* subsequent mechanical and chemical treatments, plantings, and seedings to establish the desired vegetation.

- Excludes treatment of fuels generated in conjunction with commodity production activities, such as timber stand improvement and slash.
- Excludes type conversions where the principal purpose is for commodity production.
- Excludes annual maintenance of landscaping, transportation corridors, and right-of-ways.

*Labor Costs:*

- Includes regular planned salaries for all fuels management permanent full time personnel who are dedicated for the full year to non-commodity production fuels management activities. Includes shared positions with other agencies. Permanent full time fuels or forest management personnel who are also responsible for treatment of fuels associated with commodity production must pro-rate their salary.
- Includes salaries for career seasonal and seasonal personnel hired specifically for fuels management project implementation.
- Includes salary for hours worked by qualified non-fuels management personnel responsible for developing project burn plan(s). Does not include salary for non-fuels management personnel performing (fire or non-fire) program-wide planning activities which address general fuels management activities. For example, a range specialist who has been integrally involved in the prescribed fire program, is qualified, and has shared or been the lead in developing burn plans and will continue to do so regardless of whether they benefit the range management program. The employee's salary for the hours worked can be charged to the project.
- Includes salaries for the hours actually worked on implementation for all non-fuels management personnel (fire or non-fire) that are a formal part of the unit's prescribed burn implementation team. For example, a wildlife biologist is a qualified ignition specialist and is used on all prescribed burns on and off the district land regardless of wildlife program benefits. The employee's salary for the hours worked implementing the project can be charged to the project.
- Includes costs of project development and clearances for permanent full time support personnel (such as archeologist, environmental compliance specialist, and T&E biologist) that do not have regular planned base salaries and are funded on a project-by-project basis. Funding is only for the hours worked on a project when their discipline is not a benefitting activity. Also includes the costs for these same activities if they are performed by qualified temporary hires and contracted specialists. For example, an archeologist, if funded on a project-by-project basis, or a contract archeologist, can charge salary for the time worked on the project. Funding should only be for the level

of work needed to perform the basic task(s) meeting compliance requirements commensurate with the anticipated disturbance.

- Includes overtime and premium pay for all personnel, fire and non-fire, permanent, career seasonal or seasonal, while actually involved in project implementation.
- Excludes regular planned salaries for all fire and non-fire permanent full time personnel, other than permanent full time fuels management personnel and forest management personnel that also have responsibility for treatment of non-commodity fuels, or as previously described have lead roles in burn plan development or are formal members of the prescribed fire team. Fuels management funds (2823) for non-fuels personnel performing covered roles as previously described are not spread to the respective disciplines to be used as base funding. These employees only charge to the specific project as the work is performed. Career seasonal and seasonal personnel hired under another fire subactivity or a non-fire appropriation, may not charge their base salary to the hazardous fuel reduction operations subactivity. However, appointments of career seasonal and seasonal employees may be extended under the hazardous fuel reduction operations authority when dedicated to fuels project development and implementation, regardless of the original purpose of hire. Seasonals cannot be extended beyond the annual 1039 hour limitation.
- Excludes all costs associated with general land management planning such as ecosystem plans, land management plans (RMPs), and program management plans (e.g., AMPs, HMPs, and FMPs). Program support fuels management personnel assigned to general land management planning activities would continue to code labor costs to their base-eight (2823) subactivity. For example, a fire manager working on an RMP or FMP would code all of his/her regular planned salary (base-eight) to the 2810 subactivity, even if the work addresses fuels management, such as prescribed fire. A forester working on a RMP or an activity management plan would code to his/her regular planned subactivity for all labor costs, even if he/she addresses fire and fuels to consider ecological disturbances.
- Excludes all costs of managerial oversight which is normally funded through general administrative or non-fire program management funds. Fire program managers, such as state, district, and field office FMOs, should code to the preparedness activity which covers general fire program management and readiness.

*Travel and Per Diem Costs:*

- Includes travel and per diem for all personnel involved with project implementation activities. These costs are part of project implementation and

coding would use the program element of "00" along with the specific project number.

- Includes travel and per diem for all approved personnel associated with developing, managing, and attending fuels management training and workshops as well as NWCG certified prescribed fire curriculum. These costs are part of office fuels management program support and would use the program element of "01" and the "YY99" project number.

*Administrative Support Costs:*

- Includes administrative support cost, but can only be assessed at the organization level directly responsible for implementing fuels management activities. This fee cannot exceed five percent of the field office's target allocation. Subactivity 0777 (general purpose, non-program specific support costs) cannot be assessed to the fuels management program.

*Aircraft Costs:*

- Includes flight time associated with hours actually worked on a project. Usually call-when-needed aircraft are more economical for fuels management activities than extending preparedness (2810) contract aircraft and paying for both the availability and flight time. There may be exceptions, so an analysis should be performed to determine the most economical method before extending the length of an aircraft contract.

*Public Awareness Costs:*

- Includes the cost of public awareness activities for specific projects.
- Excludes cost associated with general fire education/awareness activities and general information about the use of fire or other generic fuels management activities.

*Monitoring and Analysis Costs:*

- Includes costs for establishing plots for monitoring fire behavior, fuel moisture, and direct effects of the fire treatment, and immediate post-treatment monitoring of these plots. Long-term effects monitoring and analysis should be funded by the activity responsible for management of the vegetation.

*Contracting:*

- Includes all costs associated with contracting. Contracts can be used for all, or portions of, project development and implementation.

*Equipment Purchases:*

- Includes purchase of capitalized equipment needed for the average annual workload that cannot be economically contracted, leased, or rented. Capitalized equipment is identified as acquisition costs equal to or greater than \$10,000. Before the standard procurement process is initiated, the proposed purchase must be supported by an analysis of cost alternatives and submitted with a request to authorize the purchase to the state FMO. Purchases should always consider cost sharing with other activities and/or statewide sharing. Heavy equipment, including vehicles, tractors, and other mechanized equipment, should not be purchased. The purchase price of this category of items can be misleading as it only represents a portion of the total long term indirect costs, such as maintenance, operations, training, storage, and liability.
- Includes the cost of replacing equipment destroyed while being used on a fuels management project and will require a board of survey action.

*Miscellaneous Costs:*

- Includes costs of moving fuels management personnel (permanent change of station (PCS) moves).
- Includes costs of procuring supplies and office equipment for permanent fuels management personnel.
- Includes costs of all supplies directly related with project development and implementation.
- Includes leave surcharge, which is covered at the national level.

*Interagency Fuels Management Activities:*

The process the BLM follows for interagency fuels management activities is similar to the process BLM follows for assistance on wildland fires. The BLM fully endorses the concept of interagency support and recognizes that well planned and managed interagency activities should benefit all parties. Unlike emergency suppression activities, no office is obligated to provide fuels management assistance if it conflicts with workload priorities and jeopardizes achieving performance measures.

1) All BLM interagency fuels management activities (prescribed fire, mechanical, and chemical) involving 2823 funding must have the following:

- **An assigned fuels management project number that is unique to that project**, not one number for all interagency activities or one number for each agency. Use a project number from the list of numbers assigned to each bureau field office. The list of project numbers assigned to offices can be

found in the Appendix of the Handbook providing guidance on how to complete a wildland fire. The project number enables financial tracking and the documentation of the project in the fire reporting system.

- **Documentation of each project in the Bureau's Fire Reporting System.**  
The local BLM office that assigns the fuels project number is responsible for filing the fire report for the project as long as that assistance number is used by any BLM office. The assistance fire report is easy to complete and requires no specific knowledge of the project or BLM's costs.
- 2) The 1999 amendment to the master "Interagency Agreement for Fire Management," between the BLM, BIA, FWS, NPS and USFS, addresses several items including reimbursement for fuels management activities. Section V, G, item 7, states as follows:

"The Interior agencies have agreed to not reimburse for services rendered to one another under the Hazardous Fuel Reduction Operations program. Potential deficiencies in individual agency's Operations accounts due to assistance rendered will be covered by funding transfers following normal department protocols. The Interior bureaus and the Forest Service also agree to not reimburse each other for Hazardous Fuel Reduction Operations assistance except for extraordinary situations in which there is no opportunity for reciprocal services to achieve performance targets. Reimbursement is acceptable only when the amount to be reimbursed represents a significant portion (greater than ten percent) of the office's allocation."

The phrase "ten percent of the office's allocation" only applies to the Forest Service since the Interior agencies, through the "Master Interagency Agreement" amendment and previous documents, have already agreed to not reimburse for any services regardless of cost. The reimbursement phrase refers to that portion of work beyond what has been off-set through reciprocal services. It should also be noted that national caches run by the Forest Service have no allocated fuels funds. Therefore, they may choose to bill for all fuels management orders as they currently can for non-suppression activities. In keeping with the intent of minimizing administrative costs, BLM offices should work with the geographic area's national cache. If managed by the Forest Service, see if an arrangement can be made, such as picking up the order as opposed to having it shipped, to eliminate billing. In general, the most efficient method of obtaining supplies for fuels activities is to work directly with our local interagency neighbors.

- 3) When another federal agency requests BLM's assistance on a fuels management project, the request should go to the local BLM field office. The office assigns a fuels management project number and that will be the only BLM number issued for that project regardless of where the BLM assistance is obtained. If the local BLM office provides all of the requested assistance, all

activities are handled strictly between the two interagency neighbors. If only some, or no, local BLM assistance can be provided, it is the responsibility of the requesting agency to decide if they want to continue to seek assistance from more distant sources. If BLM assistance is obtained from other sources, usually through the normal resource ordering process (similar to wildland fires), the original BLM project number assigned is the only one used. The BLM's fuels project number is only used to cover BLM costs. Each BLM office responding uses their own office designation code (such as OR-010) with the 2823 subactivity code, the program element of "00," and the assigned project number given by the local BLM office. All costs of interagency assistance will not be considered part of any office's fuels management allocation. By having a unique project number and the fire report, these costs can be tracked at the national level. Budget adjustments among the agencies can be made if necessary. For example, a field office has been allocated \$100,000 fuels funds (2823) to meet their program support and project implementation costs to accomplish that year's planned fuels management workload. If the office uses all of this allocation on their projects, plus an additional \$8,000 for documented interagency assistance, they will not be considered over expended for the additional \$8,000. Because of the complexity that interagency assistance introduces into fund management, every office must promptly and accurately document their expenditures and activities.

For those infrequent situations when an interagency partner does not request BLM for local services and only wants to get radios from the national cache (which BLM manages) or supplies from the Great Basin national cache (which BLM manages), a unique fuels management number for each agency has been established at the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC). This number will only be used by NICC for national cache items when no BLM field office number has been assigned.

4) Interagency assistance activities should not be used to expand BLM's workforce numbers or extend the length of BLM's workforce season more than one full pay period. The BLM is still accountable to the 1,039 hour length-of-season limitation on seasonal employees. Assistance workloads must not be part of any consideration to convert seasonals to career seasonal (WAEs) or career seasonals to permanent full time. Interagency assistance will also not be considered when assessing the local workload for the purpose of establishing a permanent full time fuels management position.

## Procurement

Procedures for procurement operations in a fire emergency are intended to assure that support of an incident can be accomplished in a cost-efficient and timely manner. The *Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook* Chapter 20, Procurement, provides procedures to be used on a large incident.

### Policy

#### Planned Procurement

A unit should pre-plan, determine vendors, and when possible, procure supplies and services for an emergency incident. Planned procurement should follow accepted methods of advertisement, competition, and selection. Meal agreements, aircraft (OAS), equipment rentals, memoranda of understanding or agreements, incident base locations, motel accommodations, and vendor provided services could be purchased. Blanket purchase agreements are being replaced by credit cards, but in some instances may still be viable. Inclusion of contracting officers/procurement agents in the preplanning phase is essential. It is also recommended that units in a geographic area work together with vendors and establish one list for all agencies to use, particularly as it relates to equipment rentals and negotiated prices for goods and services. Better rates may be obtained and prices will be consistent within the area. The more that is accomplished before an incident occurs, the better the procurement for the emergency. Incident command teams will integrate quickly with the local unit and even the small local incidents benefit from preplanning.

#### Emergency Procurement

Although most initial attack and smaller incidents don't require extensive immediate procurement, unplanned situations occur that require emergency procurement. Some units have contracting officers and procurement agents who are capable of rapid support using their delegated authority.

- Some delegations of authority should be in place to allow emergency purchases using imprest, blanket purchase authorizations, or credit card with expanded limitations at appropriate vendors. The delegation must be issued by a warranted contracting officer or warranted procurement agent.
- A local unit should request assistance through the resource order process up to and including incident management teams and buying teams.
- Utilize cooperators as much as possible.
- Recognize procurement limitations:
  - No capitalized equipment purchases.
  - \$25,000 single purchase with some exemptions allowable.
  - Credit card authorized.

- Imprest purchase limits and cash on hand.

## Injury Compensation

### Policy

BLM policy provides for prompt medical attention to injured or ill employees. On a large incident the injured or ill employee may be from another agency. All forms and documentation needed to protect the employees rights must be completed and sent to appropriate employing offices. It is the responsibility of the employee, supervisor, incident commander, and the agency administrator to assure policy and procedure are followed.

### Federal Employees

At a minimum, a CA-1 is filled out by the employee and supervisor for any injury. If medical treatment beyond first aid or agency provided medical care (APMC) is required, a CA-16 is also required. The employee's home unit should receive the CA-1 and a copy of the CA-16, if available from the care provider.

### Non-Federal Employees

Provide for the appropriate level of medical care depending on the situation. Contact an agency representative (if available) or the employee's home unit to determine what forms are required. Use CA-1 and CA-16 if necessary.

### Agency Provided Medical Care

When available through a licensed physician or medical center, APMC is an option for initial treatment of injuries. Since OWPC bills the agency for all medical costs plus administrative charges, APMC may be less expensive and is directly billable to the activity during which the injury occurred. On a large incident APMC can be provided in base camp or the services can be arranged at an alternative facility.

## EFF/AD Hiring

### Policy

The authority to hire emergency firefighters/administratively determined (EFF/AD) is updated each year with an instruction memo and a pay plan as an exhibit to the *Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook*. The conditions for hiring are clearly stated. A local unit or an incident management team may hire additional personnel for an ongoing emergency incident to include rehabilitation. A local unit may also hire additional personnel to deal with an anticipated increase in fire activity, replace suppression personnel currently assigned to other fires, to hire personnel for fire use hazardous fuel reduction activities, and to train fire suppression personnel for up to 80 hours.

## Pay Plan

The pay plan is based on a regional basis for AD-1 to 4 and sets upper limits on AD-5, which is negotiated for specific jobs at the local level. All time as an EFF/AD is straight time with no premium pay authorized. This type of employment is not eligible for unemployment benefits at the conclusion of the employment period. No deductions are made (except commissary or lost property), but the earnings are taxable under Federal and State tax laws.

**Effective January 1, 1999, the Internal Revenue Service requires that federal and state income tax be withheld from emergency firefighter wages. In the past, no federal income tax was withheld.**

## Use of Pay Plan for Hazardous Fuel Reduction

The AD pay plan may be used to hire personnel for fire use hazardous fuel reduction projects to provide temporary support due to the unpredictable nature of fire use hazardous fuel reduction activities. The pay plan may not be used to circumvent normal hiring and contracting procedures. The term of hire is restricted to no greater than the period beginning 24 hours prior to planned ignition and extending through 24 hours after the perimeter is secured. The receiving (host) agency is responsible for hiring and paying under the AD pay plan for fire use hazardous fuel reduction.

## Injuries

An employee in EFF/AD status who is injured on the job will be treated utilizing CA-1 and CA-16 procedures. Once the injury is treated the employee may be released from duty with no Continuation of Pay (COP). Medical treatment beyond the initial treatment is continued under OWCP procedures.

## Contracts

### Policy

Use of contractors for support of fire suppression operations is appropriate and in many cases the preferred method of obtaining goods or services. Fire suppression contracts with other agencies are utilized when it is not practical nor economically feasible for BLM to provide its own fire protection. Fire suppression contractors must meet BLM minimum standards for fire equipment, personnel qualifications and training.

### Types of Contracts

The best example of pre-arranged contracts are those for aircraft as provided through Office of Aircraft Services. Another common arrangement is a suppression contract with a state or local government agency for fire protection services on public lands. BLM may also contract to provide services to another

agency for suppression activities. Others include meals, lodging, fuel, equipment, and service contracts.

## Buying Unit Teams

### Policy

The use of buying unit teams is encouraged to support large fire incidents which are managed by Type 1 or Type 2 incident management teams.

### Team Composition

A buying unit team can be set up in a local office or pre-planned as part of a mobilization plan. The team members are normally procurement personnel with warranted contracting authority. Two or three personnel familiar with local vendors and procurement procedures work at the field office level and support an incident at a remote location. An incident management team may be managing the fire or other type of emergency and the buying unit team would handle orders.

## Incident Business Advisor

The incident business advisor (IBA) replaces the comptroller with the focus being a liaison and advisor to the agency administrator (AA), working directly for the AA. The IBA is recognized as an interagency position. The IBA serves as a "bridge" to the AA, incident management team and other incident support functions. This "bridge" provides a communication flow to assigned resources with the focus being successful incident business management practices.

Incident business management practices on a unit are a critical element of incident operations. IBA utilization will facilitate the unit's ability to implement sound incident business practices, such as cost effectiveness and adequate financial; documentation. Agency administrators should determine if they have qualified resources available to fulfill the IBA position. Guidelines for determining the need for an IBA have been established.

## Cache Management

The BLM manages two National Interagency Support Caches (NISC), located at NIFC in Boise, Idaho and at AFS in Fairbanks, Alaska. The BLM also serves as an interagency partner in several local area interagency support caches, and operates numerous single agency initial action caches. All caches under BLM administration will maintain established stocking levels, receive and process orders from participating agencies, and will follow ordering and fire replenishment procedures as outlined by the national and geographic area cache management plans and mobilization guides.

*National Interagency Support Caches* The caches located at NIFC and AFS are two of eleven designated national caches within the National Fire Equipment System (NFES). Each of these caches provides incident support in the form of equipment and supplies to units within their respective geographic areas: the cache at NIFC services the Great Basin geographic area and the cache at AFS services the Alaska geographic area. The only services provided by these caches outside of their geographic areas is for incident support that is requested through the dispatch coordination channels, and for direct publications management orders to the Great Basin Cache at NIFC.

*Local Interagency Support Caches* These caches directly support more than one agency and, generally, cover more than one administrative unit. They will maintain stocking levels to meet the identified needs of the multiple agencies for whom service is provided. The BLM participates in management of this level of cache support in Billings, Montana; Idaho Falls, Idaho; and Salt Lake City, Utah.

*Initial Response Caches* Numerous caches of this level are maintained by the BLM. These caches will establish and maintain stocking levels to meet the initial response needs of the local unit(s).

## Inventory Management

*System Implementation* Each BLM fire cache, regardless of size, should initiate and maintain a cache inventory management system. The BLM's management system provides a check out/return concept that incorporates a "debit/crediting" for all items leaving the cache. This system is strictly followed in the two BLM NISCs. Inventory management processes should be implemented for all local interagency support and initial action caches using established categories of equipment and supplies.

*Reporting Requirements* By April 1 of each year, all local interagency support and initial action caches will submit to their servicing NISC, available quantities of the following items. All items reported will conform to refurbishment standards set forth in NFES 2249, *Fire Equipment Storage and Refurbishment Standards*.

NFES #	Description	QTY	Unit of Issue
<b>Fireline Tools</b>			
0146	Pulaski, w/plastic sheath		EA
0159	Saw, Chain, 16" to 24" bar		EA
0340	Kit, Chain saw		KT
0171	Shovel, w/plastic sheath, size #1		EA
<b>Water Handling</b>			
0966	Hose, CSJRL, 1" NPSH x 100'		LG
0967	Hose, CSJRL, 1½" NH x 100'		LG
1016	Hose, Garden collapsible synthetic _" x 50'		LG
1238	Hose, synthetic, lined 1" NPSH x 100'		LG
1239	Hose, synthetic, lined 1½" NH x 100'		LG
0870	Kit, pump, portable		KT
0670	Kit, pump, portable lightweight		KT
0024	Nozzle, twin tip comb. 1" NPSH-F Forester		EA
1081	Nozzle, combination, barrel, 1" NPSH		EA
1082	Nozzle, combination, barrel, 1½" NH		EA
1149	Pump, backpack outfit		EA
0148	Pump, fire portable, (Mark III)		EA
0124	Pump, lightweight, 45 GPM		EA
<b>15</b> 0010	Reducer, hose, 1½" NH-F to 1" NPSH-M		EA
0661	Tank, folding, 1000 GL capacity		EA
0664	Tank, folding, 1500 GL capacity		EA
0568	Tank, collapsible, 3000 GL capacity		EA
6030	Tank, collapsible, 4800 GL capacity		EA
<b>15</b> 6031	Tank, collapsible, 6000 GL capacity		EA

0731	Tee, hoseline, w/cap & chain, 1½" NH	EA
0230	Tee, hoseline, w/valve, 1½" NH	EA
0231	Valve, wye, gated, 1½" NH	EA
<b>PPE &amp; Safety</b>		
0169	Shelter, fire, w/case	EA
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
0022	Bag, sleeping, cloth, washable 3 lb fill	EA
1309	Longline kit, w/remote hook	KT

### Accountability

Fire loss/use rate is defined as all property and supplies lost, damaged or consumed on an incident. It is reported as a percentage that is calculated in dollars of items issued compared to items returned. The reasonable anticipated fire loss/use rate for all items issued to an incident averages 25 to 30 percent.

All items stocked in BLM fire caches will be categorized for return (loss tolerance/use rate) and accountability purposes.

*Trackable Items* Include items that a cache may track due to dollar value, sensitive property classification, limited quantities available, or other criteria set by each geographic area cache. Items that are considered trackable are usually engraved or tagged with a cache identification number. These items must be returned to the issuing fire cache at the end of the incident use, or documentation must be provided to the issuing cache in the form of a Property Loss/Damage Report (OF-289). All trackable items are also considered durable. 100 percent accountability is expected on trackable items.

*Durable Items* Include cache items considered to have a useful life expectancy greater than one incident. High percentages of return for these items are expected. These items are not specifically cache identified/ tagged/engraved.

Acceptable loss tolerance/use rates for the following durable goods have been established:

10% loss tolerance/use rate: water handling accessories, helicopter accessories, tents, and camp items such as heaters, lights, lanterns, tables, and chairs.

20% loss tolerance/use rate: hose, tools, backpack pumps, sleeping bags, pads, and cots.

30% loss tolerance/use rate: personal protective equipment.

*Consumable Items* Includes items normally expected to be consumed during incident use. Consumable items returned in serviceable condition are credited to the incident. No loss tolerance/use rate percentage is established. Examples of consumable items are: batteries, plastic canteens, cubitainers, forms, MREs, fusees, hot food containers, petroleum products, and medical supplies.

*Fire Loss Tolerance Reporting for Type 1 and 2 Incidents*

In order to help managers keep incident-related equipment and supply loss to a minimum, incident management teams are required to maintain accountability and tracking of these items. Guidelines and procedures to assist with this accountability are provided in Chapter 30 of the *Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook*. To further facilitate these procedures and provide oversight, a fire loss report has been developed that provides detailed information regarding consumable and durable item use. This report has been accepted by NWCG for all wildland fire agencies and will be compiled for all Type 1 and Type 2 incidents.

These reports are compiled by the geographic area National Fire Equipment System cache servicing the particular incident. Reports will then be forwarded to the responsible field office, with a copy to the state FMO, within 60 days of the close of the incident. To meet these time limits, several steps must be followed to facilitate complete data resulting in accurate reports:

- At the close of each incident, all property must be returned to the servicing NFES cache. If accountable property has been destroyed or lost, appropriate documentation must be provided to the cache for replacement and updating property records.
- All property purchased with emergency fire funds for an incident must be returned to the NFES cache system.
- All unused and/or durable NFES items must be returned to the servicing NFES cache within 30 days of control of the incident.

Agency administrators/fire management officers must review the fire loss report and recommend appropriate follow-up action if losses are excessive. Those actions and recommendations should be documented and filed in the final incident records.

*Incident Supply and Equipment Return Procedures* Supplies and equipment ordered with suppression funds will be returned to the ordering unit at the end of the incident and dispersed in one of three ways:

- Items meeting NFES standards will be returned to the local or geographic area cache for re-use within the fire supply system.

- Items **not** meeting the prescribed NFES standards will either be purchased with project funds by the local unit if the items are needed for program use, or
- Will be delivered to the unit's excess property program for dispersement.

*Cache Return and Restock Procedures* All returns for credit and restock of caches to specific incident charges **should** be made within 30 days after the close of the incident. If that time limit cannot be met, it is **required** that returns and restock be made during the same calendar year as items were issued. All returns should be either tagged with appropriate incident number, accompanied by an Interagency Waybill identifying the appropriate incident number, or accompanied by issue documents to ensure proper account credit is given. Any items returned after the calendar year of issue will be returned to multiple-fire charges, unless specific incident charge documentation (issues) can be provided with the return.

## Mobile Fire Equipment Policy

The BLM policy is to maintain each piece of mobile fire equipment in a condition consistent with the work it is expected to perform. This shall be accomplished through the intelligent application of a uniform preventive maintenance program and in accordance with all BLM fiscal requirements. Repairs shall be made and parts replaced as necessary to keep the equipment functional, with priority given to those items contributing to safety. Mobile fire equipment shall not be altered or modified without BLM national fire operations committee approval.

Regular inspections of all mobile fire equipment shall be made as outlined in the Preventive Maintenance Procedure and Record. Accurate records will record maintenance and repairs on all mobile fire equipment. Whenever possible, major repairs should be scheduled during the time of least expected activity for each type (e.g., fire apparatus during winter period; construction equipment during summer), thus reducing the possibility of breakdown during its active period. Recurring fire equipment problems/failures should be identified to the state fire equipment representative. This information will be forwarded to the national Office of Fire and Aviation for review and staffing of possible solution.

## Fire Equipment Management

### Introduction

This section contains specific guidance on activities, standards, and procedures in the management of the BLM's fire equipment. Also refer to the BLM Manual Handbook H-9216-1, *Fire Equipment and Supply Management Handbook*.

The BLM fire equipment program designs, develops, and acquires specialized equipment, cabs, chassis, utility bodies, and pump packages to meet the BLM's fire use and suppression requirements. Design is accomplished through the analysis of performance needs, survey of new technology, and the development of test models and prototype units. Acquisition of these components is done through a combination of contracting, remanufacturing of existing units, and in-house assembly. The BLM operates a vehicle program balancing state-of-the-art technology with overall cost efficiency to provide maximum safety for personnel while effectively meeting suppression needs.

### Fire Equipment Committees

*State/Geographic Area Fire Equipment Committee* Each state/geographic area maintains a fire equipment committee which, at a minimum, does the following:

- Establishes, coordinates, and standardizes internal (state) fire equipment management practices.
- Identifies equipment needs and problems for national resolution.
- Provides a state focal point who can knowledgeably speak for the state on national and local activities.

*Fire Equipment Task Group* This group consists of the state equipment committee chairs (or designated representatives), one national fire management staff, national equipment development lead and the National Business Center (BC) equipment management specialist. Meeting frequency is based on need, but meetings are typically scheduled twice a year. Agenda topics are solicited from the national office and states through the National Operations Committee. Formal meeting minutes containing recommendations are distributed for review, before adoption. The group focuses on the full fire equipment spectrum.

*The NWCG Fire Equipment Working Team (FEWT)* This group is also known as the National Interagency Fire Equipment Committee. The BLM has one term position on the FEWT; several employees may be assigned to task forces and work groups. The working team meets twice a year and produces official minutes for the NWCG. The BLM's representative is responsible for timely distribution of these minutes and soliciting BLM topics to bring to the FEWT meetings.

### Standards and Specifications

The BLM's fire engine program strives for standardization for reasons of economy and efficiency. Standardization produces state-of-the-art equipment,

effectively meeting user needs at the lowest possible cost, and with the least impact on the BLM work force.

*Management of Standards* Bureau specifications and standards are maintained by the Equipment Development Unit at NIFC. Equipment standards and standard options are managed under the “sealed pattern” concept; changes may only be made once a year, through a formal, documented process. Minor changes to blueprints and specifications are made only with the concurrence of the National Operations Committee. Major changes may be addressed only through the engine development process. Procurement of nonstandard equipment with fire management funds, when standards exist, must have prior written approval by the Director, Office of Fire and Aviation.

*Classes of Standard Units* The BLM has established standards for engines and pump units. These standards are for light engines, heavy engines, water tenders, and slip-ons. Not all of the cab and chassis carrying fire packages are Department of the Interior vehicles; several offices also use GSA vehicles. The BLM’s fire vehicle program standards also apply to GSA vehicles.

*Funding Accessories and Upgrades* States and Field Offices are responsible for procuring and funding all accessories and upgrades added to a BLM fire vehicle that are not part of the standard as defined in detail in the “sealed pattern” for the year the equipment was assembled. If the engine did not have the item on it when received from the Equipment Development Unit, that item is considered an accessory. Charges for accessories (e.g., special painting, supplemental lighting, warning devices, winches) and the maintenance of these items cannot be made against the WCF. They are totally the responsibility of the local unit.

*Property Numbers* The Equipment Development Unit assigns property numbers to completed pump packages. Packages built at a local unit have property numbers assigned by that office. The National Business Center assigns an Interior license plate to the cab and chassis. The number on that plate is the property number by which the cab and chassis will be identified, in both the APPS and the AFMS. A credit card is issued when the vehicle has reached its assigned destination and on receipt of the transfer document. This document shows the license number of the vehicle and the property number of the pump package with complete assignment information on both items.

The heavy engine, water tender, or special purpose vehicle pump package is assigned a single property number. The property number covers all components comprising the pump package, the cab/chassis, and the utility body.

The light engine pump package is considered to be the slip-on type and, therefore, is assigned a separate property number covering all components

comprising the slip-on package. The utility body and cab/chassis are considered a unit and have a property number separate from the slip-on pump package.

### Mid-Cycle Maintenance

Field offices perform the maintenance on their fire vehicles. Some wear and tear cannot be resolved through a regular maintenance schedule. To ensure the vehicle's integrity, reliability, and cosmetic value, it is often necessary to perform special maintenance at the mid-cycle point. Mid-cycle is determined as the halfway point in the WCF replacement cycle. All mid-cycle maintenance is chargeable to the WCF and must have written approval in advance by the state director. All major damage, not from normal use, is chargeable to the appropriate activities, not WCF. The cost of mid-cycle activities becomes part of the use rate, and performance is the responsibility of the field office. The special mid-cycle maintenance is limited to the following:

*Tank Maintenance* Tops removed, (If steel) tank inspected and cleaned; baffles checked and rewelded, if necessary; rust damage repaired, if needed.

#### *Cosmetics*

- Painting – Is done at mid-cycle or if major damage has occurred. Repainting is covered by WCF only at mid-life cycle, where normal deterioration has occurred.
- Body work – Is limited to damage repair and does not include package or equipment upgrades.
- Pumping system – Does not include upgrades to newer models, but does include rebuilding and repainting, when necessary.
- Hose reels – Rewind motors and rebuild hose swivels; model/styles remain original.

### Valid/Invalid Expenditures of WCF Funds

*Add-Ons and Accessories* All equipment added to a fire engine vehicle after delivery such as light bars, tools, radios, and winches are considered "add-on" items and are not funded through WCF. The cost of fire vehicle or fire package modifications, including the replacement/modification of equipment provided with the vehicle on delivery (such as bumpers), is not funded through the WCF, unless the equipment is in need of replacement due to damage, wear, or defect. All accidents must be charged to benefitting activity.

*Vehicle Repairs, Maintenance* The cost of all vehicle repairs and maintenance may be charged to WCF. Exceptions include the cost of replacement or repair of "add-on" items and accessories, and equipment damage other than normal use.

*Mid-Cycle Maintenance* Mid-cycle is required to ensure a fire vehicle's reliability, integrity, and cosmetic value. Special maintenance items may be performed halfway into the WCF life cycle. This maintenance is an appropriate WCF charge. (See Mid-Cycle Maintenance for details.)

*Travel on WCF Funds* Travel using the WCF must be pre-authorized by the WCF Manager and is normally allowed only to NIFC and National Business Center personnel serving as contracting officers, contracting officer representatives, and project inspectors on fire vehicle related contracts, and for fire vehicle delivery by NIFC personnel.

### Fixed Ownership Rates (FORs)

These are the annual fees charged monthly against a fire vehicle currently in service that accumulate over the life of a vehicle, which are then applied toward the purchase of the eventual replacement vehicle. The FORs are adjusted annually by WCF to reflect changes in replacement cost due to inflation or specification changes. Sales of outgoing fire vehicles provide approximately 20% of the value of the replacement vehicle.

Slip-on pump packages on light engines are included in the rates charged for class 663 vehicles. Slip-on pump packages not on WCF class 663 vehicles (i.e., GSA vehicles) are charged a separate rate which is collected at the end of each fiscal year. Incomplete or improper disposal of outgoing (replaced) fire engine equipment results in continued charges of FORs until such time as disposal is completed.

### Use Rate Determination

Use rates are independent of the FOR. The use rate is a yearly adjusted rate that is equal to the average cost for the use and maintenance of vehicles in that class the preceding year. The use-rate figure may vary significantly from year to year, particularly in those vehicle classes with a low number of vehicles which are more sensitive to large maintenance or repair charges on a single vehicle.

### Property Classifications

The following vehicle classes comprise the majority of fire engine equipment currently in service.

- 421022 = Slip-on pump package to 300 gallons
- 421042 = Slip-on pump packages from 300–2000 gallons
- 421062 = Slip-on pump packages over 2000 gallons
- 644 = Crew Carrier
- 660 = Light helitack support vehicle

- 662 = Light fire engine, up to 17,500 GVW
- 663 = Light fire engine (with slip-on) up to 12,500 GVW
- 664 = Medium fire engine (under development) 21,000-26,000 GVW
- 665 = Heavy fire engine (Model 14)
- 667 = Heavy fire engine (diesel)
- 668 = Water tender (gas)
- 669 = Water tender (diesel)
- 925 & 926 = Unimog or equivalent special-purpose vehicle

### Property Transfer/Replacement

*Surplus Vehicle/Early Turn-Ins/Transfer* Fire vehicles that are to be replaced may be transferred to another area for continued service with the approval of the appropriate state directors and WCF managers. In these instances, the vehicle remains in the same class, and the FOR and use rates will continue to be charged to the unit acquiring the vehicle. Districts wishing to dispose of fire engine equipment prior to the normal replacement date may do so. In these instances, no future replacement is provided and there is no accrued credit from the FOR collected on that unit prior to disposal. Districts acquiring this type of equipment continue payment of the FOR and use rates.

*Conversions* Offices, in possession of fire engine equipment due for replacement, have the option of replacing that equipment with vehicles of another class, if the change in NUS is covered and in the approved FMP (e.g., conversion of two light engines to one heavy engine). State director and property manager approval is required, and sufficient contributions through the FOR or other funds to make up any difference in cost are required.